

Chapter 1

Bringing Monsters to Life Through Encounters with Writing



Eileen Honan, David Bright and Stewart Riddle

Abstract As researchers, much of our time is spent in the act of ‘writing’. The production of research as writing is considered an essential part of our research outputs, which are measured and policed by citation metrics and ranked journal and publisher lists. For writing to be recognised and counted as research, it must appear in certain outlets, each of which makes its own certain demands of what is judged to be research. This, we fear, feeds a nonsensical academic apparatus, much like a Goldberg machine that has taken on a life of its own, existing only to perpetuate its own complicated systems of connections and cogs and wheels, arbitrary to the originary desire to write and to become-writer. And this academic publishing apparatus privileges its internal machinery, ossifying its peculiar set of connections, trapping our writing production rather than seeking out and augmenting new and different forms of connection between writer and text and reader. We fear that this arrangement of parts produces us as academic writers who are inert, dead, coded, ranked and listless numbers. And so we ask what if we were to put these nonsenses aside and instead undertake experiments and different encounters with writing, where the writing itself becomes our method of inquiry? Following in the pathway created by Laurel Richardson, we investigate what monstrous creations, full of vitality and fervour, might be made possible if we were to bypass the dead and dismembered assemblage and instead plug ourselves directly into the spark? Would such experiments with writing bring us to life or would our monsters simply offer us torment rather than succour?

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On not writing an introduction

This collection is an.....

In this book we attempt to.....

The aim of this book is to.....

In our collective musings about the production of writing that echoes some of the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari, breaks the boundaries of conventional academic writing, and engages with monsters and the monstrous, we spent a lot of time thinking about the type of writing we would like to include in a collection. We spent a lot of time thinking about who we would want to contribute, and how we would frame our invitations.

We did not spend a lot of time thinking about how to write an introduction to the collection.

We did not spend a lot of time on providing a *concrete context for the collection*, which apparently is what good introductions do according to one of our reviewers.

We deliberately and carefully and thoughtfully began with an unstructured piece of writing that captured our collective thoughts about what the current restrictive practices in academic writing are doing to the intellectual endeavours of those who write academically.

Far from being *universalising* and *imperialist*, we felt we were presenting our own concerns, fears, and anxieties, rather than making poorly conceived generalisations. But just to be clear, concise, and logical, here are some important points about this collection. If you are not interested in logic, or clear messages about what is not included or is included, then please feel free to jump ahead to ‘The Impulse to Write’.

On not Being Universalising and Imperialist, and Providing a Logical Introduction

This collection is our attempt to draw together some writing that is inspired by Deleuze and Guattari. Most of the authors are from the field of education. Most of the authors are from Australia and the United Kingdom. Most of the authors do not claim to be experts in writing, in monstrous writing, or in the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. The authors responded to this call for contributions:

And so we ask what if we were to put these nonsenses aside and instead undertake experiments and different encounters with writing, where the writing itself becomes our method of inquiry? Following in the pathway created by Laurel Richardson, we investigate what monstrous creations, full of vitality and fervour, might be made possible if we were to bypass the dead and dismembered assemblage and instead plug ourselves directly into the spark? Would such experiments with writing bring us to life or would our monsters simply offer us torment rather than succour?

In this book, authors who are working with Deleuzian theories in educational research in Australia, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, grapple with how the academic-writing-machine might become less contained and bounded, and instead be used to free impulses to generate different creations and different connections.

We experiment with forms of writing that challenge the boundaries of academic language, to move beyond the strictures of the scientific method—what works and what counts—to make language vibrate with a new intensity. We consider this writing as vibrant, as bringing things to life, as Frankenstein did with his monster, as Deleuze (1995, p. 141) asks us to do:

One's always writing to bring things to life, to free life from where it's trapped, to trace lines of flight. The language for doing that can't be a homogeneous system, it's something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass, come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed.

Writing in this way becomes a disruptive technology, designed to interfere with normative practices of academic publishing apparatus that expects well-defined research problems, methodologically collected data, rigorous analyses, clearly stated implications, and considered recommendations. We create hybrid texts, part academic part creative assemblages, almost-but-perhaps-not-quite recognisable as research. Stories that blur the lines between true and untrue, re-presentation and invention. Monstrous children that say all that research says, but result from all sorts 'shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 6) that we really enjoy.

The contributions in this book are examples of writing that hopes that something might happen in its reading; that some new connection might be made, but that also acknowledges the contingency of the encounter between text and reader, and the impossibility of presuming to know what may be.

As can be seen here, we did not set up any rules or restrictions about what was required. In our responses to those who expressed interest, we noted word length, the style guide required by the publisher, and a timeline towards publication. We deliberately and carefully did not police or constrain. That is what others do. That is what we are collectively arguing against.

We are of course, aware that there are certain exclusions [*the introduction ignores the very different set of concerns of scholars from non-English speaking countries who are trying to enter the Anglo-centric world of international academic writing*]. But this is not what we set out to do. If it was then we would have called on the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1986) on minor literature, and writing in the minor, which two of us have done previously in relation to doctoral students in Australia attempting to write a thesis when English is an additional language (Honan & Bright, 2016).

We could go on to explain all the things that this collection was not supposed to do, and all the things that we have not included, and all the things that we supposedly *ignored*. Instead, we would like for the writing to do the talking, to

encourage our readers to dive in, to swim in the pool of monstrous writing that has been created within the confines of the pages of this book. We encourage our readers to come up with their own definitions of monstrous writing rather than creating one ourselves. Muse, think, wonder, draw, write, create and respond in any way to the work before you.

So, in all its messy and unstructured *incoherence*, what follows is our musings on what it means to write monstrously.

The Impulse to Write

If our impulses were confined to hunger, thirst, and desire, we might be nearly free; but now we are moved by every wind that blows and a chance word or scene that that word may convey to us (Shelley, 1869).

As researchers and academics, much of our time is spent in the act of ‘writing’. The production of research as writing is considered an essential part of our research outputs, which are measured and policed by citation metrics alongside ranked journal and publisher lists, according to particular historical categories. For writing to be recognised and counted as research it must appear in certain outlets, each of which makes its own demands of what is judged to be research. Academic writing sits at the apex of the huge knowledge-producing machine that we have come to call the contemporary university.

This measurement and policing of academics’ work, particularly their writing, is assisted and supported by complex sets of rules and laws that work as boundary riders, gates that open or close depending on obedience. Moreover, this academic publishing apparatus privileges its internal machinery, ossifying its peculiar set of connections, trapping writing production rather than seeking out and augmenting new and different forms of connection between writer and text and reader.

The machinery’s cogs and wheels are oiled and smoothed through the production of texts and materials that purport to help, but really train and constrain; guides that are rule books, tips that become law. There is a proliferation of blogs and books, workshops and guides, rules and tips that aim to help us in our ‘academic writing’. Publishers and journals provide ‘style guides’, conferences require online submissions of abstracts using strictly policed word and character counts, grant applications require ‘language understood by the lay person’; all of which presume a certain *telos* of writing—that we have finally learned how to write.

These rules and laws, like cogs and wheels, feed a nonsensical academic apparatus, much like a Goldberg machine. The machine has taken on a life of its own, existing only to perpetuate its own complicated systems of connections and cogs and wheels, arbitrary to the originary desire to write and to become-writer. We fear that this arrangement of parts produces us as academic writers who are inert, dead, coded, ranked and listless numbers. In addition, the language created through following the code is lifeless, restricted, and bureaucratic. We fear, reading and writing with Deleuze (1995), that:

What now seems problematic is the situation in which young philosophers, but also all young writers who are involved in creating something, find themselves. They face the threat of being stifled from the outset. It's become very difficult to do any work, because a whole system of "acculturation" and anticreativity specific to the developed nations is taking shape. It's far worse than censorship (p. 27).

We are concerned that 'we are being told how we must see and what we must do when we investigate' (Law, 2004, p. 4) in our research endeavours. Additionally, in writing we increasingly find ourselves stifled from the outset, operating within a problematic of acculturation and anti-creativity wherein we are urged to make original and creative contributions through practices of writing that 'are necessary while at the same time necessarily limiting' (Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei, 2012, p. 728). It seems to us that the affordances of academic writing as a place for making new connections, ruptures and alliances with thought and wisdom in the world, is increasingly in danger.

Therefore, we ask: what if we were to put these nonsenses aside and instead undertake experiments and different encounters with writing, where the writing itself becomes our method of inquiry? Following in the pathway suggested by Richardson (1997), we investigate what monstrous creations, full of vitality and fervour, might be made possible if we were to bypass the dead and dismembered assemblage and instead plug ourselves directly into the spark? Would such experiments with writing bring us to life or would our monsters simply offer us torment rather than succour?

Monstrous Writing Machines

There is no doubt in our minds that we have become *academicwritingmachines* (Henderson, Honan, & Loch, 2016), plugging into the *universitymachine* and the *publishingmachine*. We are complicit to a degree in the formation and sustainment of the assemblage that produces academic writers producing academic writing. A little like the following perhaps:

Machines
 Machinic
 Everywhere it is machines
 A writing machine driving other machines
 Couplings and connections, disjunctions and flows
 Cogs, wheels, pulleys, and levers,
 Wounds, scars, ruptures and breaks
 Lines of connections
 Intensities

Singularities
 Virtual possibilities
 Corporeal markings
 Between present and past
 Between places and spaces
 Territorialized and re-territorialized
 And lines of flight
 This is the academicwritingmachine (Henderson et al., 2016, p. 5).

We are also subjects of a long tradition of academic discipline that desires thinking and the creation of ideas—the production of new knowledge—while at the same time disciplines the methods of thinking and writing that are permissible to generate and express those ideas. Creativity and experimentation, it often seems, are not recognised ways of creating new knowledge. The advice given to those who are trying to enter the discipline often derides creative approaches to writing:

Knowing how to express your ideas in logical sequence and in a clear and concise manner is critical to your success as a scholarly practitioner. The qualities of logic, precision, clarity, directness, and brevity are also qualities of effective thinking. (Roberts, 2010, p. 111)

This perhaps begs the question: what if we decided to remove ourselves from the act of writing? Could it be done? Actually, it already is being done. It is a badly kept secret that automated writing bots are used by large international corporations and media conglomerates to construct news stories and populate social media feeds with all kinds of facts, alternative or otherwise. There are even bots that will write your essay or academic paper for you. You simply need to provide the topic and your credit card details. Plug and go. Make a cup of tea. Return and your paper is ready. Submit. Monstrous indeed? Or merely mechanical? Here, let us have a go at removing ourselves from the machine for a moment, and handing over to the algorithm:

heT rmnosste mrfo aauntrprules erol get a peytr dba pra. Of seocur nabir engat,i mrgn-midbee,is and rmdrue to nema a wfe rea ditfiflcu ot rkooevlo uBT srh'ete a ngthi or wot yuo anc elnar rfmo hte smto r-inihaagsir rsnosemt cwhih anc elhp uoy sclsslyucuef grbin oryu ntgrwi fsefrito kbca mrof eth edad. aWth uYo Can Lerna Form Zseibom. untporiytOp - tohluAgh ozembis at'nc lelt mtie, hvea rbilreet heeg,niy dna ear uneyletqfr gsimnis psatr of rehti nyat,oam heyT do evah a rkralbeame ttira that nyam of su oudlw eid to ssesps:o oemsbiZ ear pstruoptisno. You may be too! Undoubtedly take the moment and make sure your writing does not pass up on real chances. eSt estricali oslga so uyo ntd'o bynlild ebusmtl oint na eilnaubwnn inopiots, btu aehv faith in itgnak a enw rieonicdt hwen tpr-piuryot srptnsee !sileft doiatneciD - deDdeiatc ot rieth sa,uec osebizm llwi go thhogur teagr segltnh ot eveahic ithet gloa: atE rbisna. eurS, teyh dtno' peels or osp ot eatk a ekra,b tbu teirh lygdeiuinn ousfc si pelpul!dbaaa urTn teh slaebt yb pinaplgly tsih eams naw-iuernvg icedoaitnd as a iretrw. Stay innovative and provide your readers the best content to reap the rewards. Ptiornparae - Teh flul onom aym be a tslanepa sitgh rof u.s but it's a bheorlir seucr fro oryveleews. heyT amy ton nkow leirceps hnwet het nxeT llfu noom s,i ubt slvwewreoe dnot' watn to be thcuag fof argdu dna will ekam aoapsntirre. You too acn kame mioertasppa rof hte nivaibetel srceu atth sgulpae so amny rothshau: 'rrestiw klbco. Develop a daily writing routine and have a plan to be prepared for any unforeseen

challenges so that you can continue providing content for your readers without delay. neHgru - reWwslovee rae nooitrsulyo meuogsre astseb, ta'sht yalfir lraae. tSart tiwh hrtoter-ms galos nad dilbu onpu mteh ot eahlngcle fyulorse to eb,reettb s,ftaer nda rmesatr.¹

Monstrous enough? Let us try again:

As probeers, much of our time expire during the time that 'manuscript'. The yielding of consult as manuscript is treated an quintessence of our scrutinize outputs, whatever are deliberate and shield by summons poetry and piled newspaper and newspaper lists. For novel afterlife identified and counted as probe it must materialize in definite outlets, each of that get along own absolute demands of provision judged planned scrutinize. This, we fear, feeds a ridiculous professor structure, much like a Goldberg vehicle that has occupied on a life of its own, alive only to maintain its own convoluted systems of hookups and cogs and wheels, discretionary to the originary bespeak to scribble and afterlifecome-tellr. And this abstract publishing network privileges its national gadgetry, ossifying its distinct set of links, trapping our print manufacturing rather seek and augmenting new and strange forms of hookup between scribbler and text and announcer. We fear that this distribution of parts produces us as professor composers who exist, dead, classify, grouped and inert numbers. And so we ask supposing we commit put the above-mentioned nonsenses out and in place of commence experiments and original encounters with literature, locus the literature itself becomes our approach of scrutiny? Following in the artery created by Laurel Richardson, we review what enormous creations, full of piss and vinegar and sincerity, perchance enforce if we sniff out skirt the dead and dismembered group and rather than plug without help promptly into the stir? Would such experiments with literature force us to life or would our monsters wholly award us afflict in place of succor?²

Based on our pair of automated bot writing experiments above, perhaps we might rest a little easier as academicwritingmachines. It seems that we are not quite yet about to be replaced by algorithms. So the universitymachine is stuck with relying on academics who write in order to build the knowledge-production outputs and metrics. Yet this does not make us feel any better as we are still trying to deterritorialise academic writing, despite the constant reterritorialising forces of institutional academia and publishing. The question remains: how might we call forth monsters in our writing? Is it something we dare to do?

Deleuze (2004) describes the introduction of political functions (writing) into the institution (university) as producing a particular kind of monster, 'a machine to produce and give voice to desire' (p. 201). This takes us to the problem of how we might call forth monsters that produce and give voice to the desires of the academicwritingmachine.

¹This is the result of using Articoolo (www.articoolo.com) to generate a piece on "Monstrous Writing". There was a further option to pay some money to decode the text. We declined because we actually quite liked this version.

²We plugged the opening passage from the book proposal into SpinBot (www.spinbot.net) and this was the resulting 'improved' text.

Calling Forth Monsters

Our term, ‘monstrous writing’ emerged from our usual practice of playing with words, bouncing ideas and language across coffee tables and bar counters. We mused on this from Deleuze:

One’s always writing to bring things to life, to free life from where it’s trapped, to trace lines of flight. The language for doing that can’t be a homogeneous system, it’s something unstable, always heterogeneous, in which style carves differences of potential between which things can pass, come to pass, a spark can flash and break out of language itself, to make us see and think what was lying in the shadow around the words, things we were hardly aware existed. Deleuze (1995, p. 141)

Such a writing seems opposed to the logics of clarity, concision, precision, directness, and brevity that are now foisted upon all young writers, forcing them to submit to a homogenous system, writing recognisable writing, focusing only on things we know exist, that sit plainly on the brilliance of the page, ignoring the all that lies in the shadows and darker places of our thinking and writing. Thinking, Deleuze seems to have thought, was not about logic and method and other such clear and concise directives. As Badiou (2000) observes, ‘Deleuze hated logic’ (p. 194). Rather, for Deleuze (1994):

The problem is not to direct or methodically apply a thought which preexists in principle and in nature, but to bring into being that which does not yet exist (there is no other work, all the rest is arbitrary, mere decoration). To think is to create – there is no other creation – but to create is first of all to engender “thinking” in thought (p. 147).

Writing this way—to bring into something into being, to bring to our attention things we were hardly aware existed—becomes writing when writing is thinking and ‘writing is also a way of “knowing”—a method of discovery and analysis’ (Richardson, 1994, p. 516). Such a writing precludes logic and sequence and clarity and concision and directness and brevity, as if we only wrote once we knew what it was we wanted to write, as if the writing had somehow already been written, and our writing of it was merely the recording of a thought pre-existing in principle and nature. And, of course, Deleuze and Guattari didn’t write their ideas in a logical sequence. As St. Pierre (2016) notes, for example, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* ‘is not logically sequential ... they throw concept after concept at the reader without explaining them; in other words, they don’t carefully define their terms’ (pp. 2–3).

For us, the very concept of thought and the thinking in thought is necessarily nomadic. Deleuze, in his conversations with Parnet (2002) suggests that:

To make thought a nomadic power is not necessarily to move, but it is to shake the model of the state apparatus, the idol or image which weighs down thought, the monster squatting on it. To give thought an absolute speed, a war-machine, a geography and all these becomings or these paths which criss-cross a steppe (p. 32).

Does academic writing allow nomadic thought or does it instead stultify and reduce the academic to a passive component of a larger machinic array? There is a persistent niggling thought always in the back of our minds while we perform our academic lives: what if we are but laying down the sediment of the state apparatus, that is, we are actually the monsters who are weighing down thought? These are difficult questions to ask ourselves, given the self-importance of exalting our *academic freedom* and public roles as scholars and intellectuals. What then of monsters?

We think that, perhaps, Deleuze might offer something for academics wishing to write, and to think (for the two are the same to us) monstrously. He says, ‘thought “makes” difference, but difference is monstrous’ (Deleuze, 1994, p. 29). Indeed! Academics often claim to seek difference, but perhaps what we tend to produce is nothing more than a series of repetitions, or acts of re-territorialisation that work to produce ever greater layers of sediment (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). And this is the death of thought, of difference, of life. It seems to us that we need monsters, perhaps more than ever before. Set the monsters loose.

Hwæt. We Gardena in geardagum,
 þeodcyniga, þrym gefrunon,
 hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
 Oft Scyld Scefing sceaþena þreatum,
 monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
 egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
 feascæft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
 weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
 oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymbsittendra
 ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
 gomban gylðan. þæt wæs god cyning.
 ðæm eafra wæs æfter cenned,
 geong in geardum, þone god sende
 folce to frofre; fyrenðearfe ongeat
 þe hie ær drugon aldorlease
 lange hwile. Him þæs liffrea,
 wuldres wealdend, woroldare forgeaf;
 Beowulf wæs breme blæd wide sprang³

Our riffing on these themes of monsters and writing brought us to Shelley and Frankenstein, the enduring literary trope of the monster brought to life. In discussing the general popular misunderstandings of this trope we stuttered and tripped over thinking about ourselves as Mary Shelley writing about monsters, or Frankenstein himself creating the monster, or the Monster himself, the Adam created anew.

What are these monsters that are brought to life? Perhaps it depends on whom you ask. For some, the collection of writing presented here might be seen as something akin to the giant squid that attacks Captain Nemo’s *Nautilus*: a mass of

³The opening lines from Beowulf, a piece of monstrous writing. Source: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43521/beowulf-old-english-version>

waving tentacles and a ragged beak, waiting to devour the poor reader. We do not doubt that these pages may discomfit the reader desiring logical, sequence, clarity, and concision in the certitude of their reason.

For others, perhaps, what lies within might be something more along the lines of the Wendigo, a terrifying all-devouring monster from Algonquian folklore. Legend has it that the Wendigo is formed from man eating himself and forming an insatiable desire for further flesh. Not so dissimilar from the yearning academic desire for greater esteem, increasing metrics, and promotion that form part of the basic driving force of the university machine.

We could talk for many pages of the various monsters from literature, folklore and ancient mythology, of Medusa and Grendel, of vampires and werewolves, of beings that perhaps are most terrifying because there is an element of them that we recognise in ourselves. Who does not contain within them a cadre of personal monsters, just waiting for the right moment to break free and be brought forth into the world?

Or, maybe something more Deleuzian, his monstrous offspring, writing that is indeed Deleuze's but mutated, damaged, wrong, unworthy of his proper name, the authors herein guilty of 'taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 6). On talking of Lewis Carroll, Deleuze (1997) makes the following observations, which we think might well work for the small collection contained within these pages:

Everything begins with a horrible combat, the combat of depths: things explode or make us explode, boxes are too small for their contents, foods are toxic and poisonous, entrails are stretched, monsters grab at us. A little brother uses his little brother as bait. Bodies intermingle with one another, everything is mixed up in a kind of cannibalism that joins together food and excrement. Even words are eaten. This is the domain of the action and passion of bodies: things and words are scattered in every direction, or on the contrary are welded together into nondecomposable blocks. Everything in depth is horrible, everything is nonsense (p. 21).

Writing with Deleuze

The irony of writing this introductory chapter is not lost on us. For a book that is intended to bring forth monstrous creations from academics encountering Deleuze in their writing, here we sit, pulling it neatly together in order to summarise and overview the book. Perhaps we do not speak of themes or findings, nor attempt to rationalise and limit the methodological and conceptual work being undertaken. Nevertheless, in providing this introduction we necessarily reterritorialise and form new strata of writing. The book. The words. They capture us even as we seek to be freed from them. But although we striate ourselves here, perhaps that's okay. After all, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) remind us to 'never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us' (p. 500). We do not expect to be saved, but we do hope to be monstrous.

In this book, authors who are working with Deleuzian concepts in education grapple with how the academic writing machine might become less contained and bounded, and instead be used to free impulses to generate different creations and different connections. Deleuze and Guattari (1991) argue that philosophy is the creation of concepts and that ‘concepts are really monsters that are reborn from their fragments’ (p. 140). Writing with Deleuze is thus a monstrous form of creation. It is the thinking in thought that we spoke of earlier.

We experiment with forms of writing that challenge the boundaries of academic language, to move beyond the strictures of the scientific method—what works and what counts—to make language vibrate with a new intensity. We consider this writing as vibrant, as bringing things to life, as Frankenstein did with his monster, as Deleuze (1995) asks us to do when we bring monsters to life.

Writing in this way becomes a disruptive technology, designed to interfere with the normative practices of an academic publishing apparatus that expects well-defined research problems, methodologically collected data, rigorous analyses, clearly stated implications, and considered recommendations. We create hybrid texts, part-academic-part-creative assemblages, words and phrases and clauses and sentences laid out on a page, arranged ‘not to foster or extract meaning, but to give rise to intense, and intensive, expression’ (Lecerle, 2002, p. 195). Almost-but-perhaps-not-quite recognisable as research. Stories that blur the lines between true and untrue, re-presentation and invention, fact and fiction (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005). Monstrous children that say all that research says, but result from all sorts of ‘shifting, slipping, dislocations, and hidden emissions’ (Deleuze, 1995, p. 6) that we really enjoy, and that, we hope, draw your attention to something beyond the words, something still in the shadows around the words that even we were hardly aware existed.

The contributions in this book are examples of writing that hopes that something might happen in its reading; that some new connection might be made, but that also acknowledges the contingency of the encounter between text and reader, and the impossibility of presuming to know what may be. Each chapter presents a different response to the desire of the writer to write. It is a strange thing, a kind of sorcery (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to write: ‘it is because writing is a becoming, writing is traversed by strange becomings that are not becomings-writer, but becomings-rat, becomings-insect, becomings-wolf, etc.’ (p. 240).

Each chapter is deliberately idiosyncratic, there are no rules or guidelines to apply in monstrous writing. While some chapters take a line of flight sparked by the words of Shelley into styles that cannot be neatly packaged as ‘academic writing’, others are more empirical, and formalised and structured, using the devices of the machine itself to disrupt and mangle its operation. There is no unified theme or direction. We are both monsters, and creating monsters, we do but do not show, we show but do not do, we explicate what monstrous writing is, we write about monsters.

In the process of assembling this book, we asked authors to take up the call to create monsters through their engagement with Deleuze and writing in the academy in various ways. It is a matter of some delight to find that the resulting contributions

far exceed our initial hope for a collection that would engage with Deleuze and the question of writing within the academy in interesting and productive ways. While we do not wish to reduce any of the following pieces to short and sensible summaries, it does seem appropriate to consider some of the different approaches taken to writing with Deleuze.

First, Mirka Koro-Ljungberg, Adam Clark, Tim Wells, and Jorge Sandoval use their chapter as a 'lure' to produce a collaborative response to Deleuze's notion of infinite other-ness, proposing that such monstrous writing may explore intermingling intensities and relationalities.

In Eileen Honan's chapter, she likens the academic publishing apparatus to a Rube Goldberg machine, one that performs a series of unnecessary and over-complicated processes in the name of producing academic outputs and academics themselves. Tapping into her visceral sense of anger as a creative epistemological force, Honan provides one account of turning words into a force acting upon the world, albeit words that might stutter and stammer as they stumble onto the page.

Thekla Anastasiou, Rachel Holmes and Katherine Runswick-Cole explore young children's embodied engagements with food. Moving beyond narratives of 'healthy eating' and 'balanced diet', they use Deleuzean concepts of difference and becoming to create a monstrous story about the limits of a child's body.

Working with the concept of flow, Stewart Riddle undertakes an experimental exploration of how the academic writing machine might create a breakflow from the regulated and striated university machine in order to create difference. It is a necessarily incomplete attempt, although there are some potential deterritorialising effects on the striated and regulated bounds of the academic who writes.

Susanne Gannon examines the multiple ways that academics come to be complicit in being measured and made countable through their writing. Drawing on the rise of alt-metrics and the production of the academic as the 'measured monster' of the university machine, she combines excerpts from her promotion applications with snapshots of article metrics to unleash the full monstrosity of being and becoming a quantified academic subject.

David Bright works through the concept of writing as signs to be developed by readers, rather than writers. In doing so, he works on a politics of deterritorialising academic writing and shifting the locus of language and power away from the academic subject and towards something potentially more monstrous.

Appearing in the middle, the chapter by Dagmar Alexander, Jan Bradford, Susanne Gannon, Fiona Murray, Naomi Partridge, Zoi Simopoulou, Jonathan Wyatt, Corrienne McCulloch, Anthea Naylor, Lisa Williams explores processes of collaborative writing and citationality as they are produced from the middle of a collaborative writing group.

This is followed by Sheridan Linnell and Peter Bansel's compelling three-act play. Their script explores the experiences of key protagonists, Ed and Chérie, within the university machine and how they are alternatively made both powerful and powerless within the assemblage. The play works a series of de- and re-territorialisations of the academic as one who writes and is written into being.

Linda Henderson presents an intertwining of her academic writing with walking and the evocative metaphor of shifting sands, in order to experiment with becoming differently productive. It is a piece of monstrous affectivity, seeking to disrupt the bounds of performative academia to do and be something different.

Carolina Cabezas-Benalcázar experiments with the connections and conjugations of language-ing to abstract her experiences of learning and teaching English/in-English. Writing nomadically, she transgresses the stringent rules and overcodings of language(s) to encounter the pleasures of flowing in-and-through(out) immanent becomings.

Following this, Naomi Barnes invokes Cthulu to produce a minor text that rejects masculine language to write from subterranean realms. Weaving together threads from literature, life and libidinal flows, her chapter experiments with writing as non-representational affects, composed with the Cthuluscene.

David Cole reconsiders the monstrous through an exploration of Pierre Klossowski's *The Immoral Adolescent* and Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the *eternal return* to explore a new openness to fear and the monstrous.

Finally, in her Afterword, Maggie Maclure encounters these chapters, warning that in our attempts to embrace monstrosity, we must be careful that our monsters don't devour us. She leaves open the question of monstrosity and the academicwriting machine as a productive tension that can be explored further in potentially creative and playful ways.

These encounters are not meant to provide succour and release for the troubled reader, but nor are they frustrated and impotent raging of authors who are trapped and see no way out. They are what they are, and that is nothing more than a collection of experiments, encounters, and events that plug into the world. These monsters have been brought forth into the light of day, although 'even unfolded and laid out flat, the monsters still haunt us' (Deleuze, 1997, p. 22). And that is perhaps how it should be.

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